

GRRRLS OWN GUIDE TO PROTESTING GLOBALISATION

**DURING THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM S11
PROTESTS**

PRODUCED FOR WWW

**11th, 12th & 13th
September, 2000**

**outside the Crown Casino
Melbourne**



GRRRLS OWN GUIDE TO PROTESTING GLOBALISATION

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON WWW:

World Wide Wonder Women (www) is a feminist activist affinity group set up to organise some women focussed actions at the S11 protests.

The members of the affinity group are women of various ages and backgrounds, all of whom have been active for anywhere from a couple of years to too bloody long.

www ran some training in the lead up to the protests and will be participating in the non-violent protests outside of the Crown Casino on September 11, 12 & 13.

INTRODUCTION:

This booklet is a small contribution to the women of all ages participating in the World Economic Forum S11 protests being held in Melbourne on September 11, 12 and 13, 2000.

This is meant to complement, not replace, the handbooks created by other organising groups involved in the S11. We can't give as much legal, medical and logistical advice as some of the other handbooks around. But we hope this handbook helps you think through some things before during and after you take part in these protests.

The opinions in the **Grrrls Own Guide to Protesting Globalisation** are not necessarily those of all members of the World Wide Wonder Women affinity group. The opinions on this handbook are not to be taken as legal or medical advice; there should be legal and medical people available at the protests for this.

There is no way of telling you how to take part in protests like the S11 - it is your choice and also your responsibility to decide how to act. But above all, know the issues, know your rights, know your limitations and have a lot of fun.

This booklet was written and produced primarily by Dimity and Cath, on behalf of the [www](http://www.grrrls.org) - please copy & distribute it freely but credit us for the work if you use it elsewhere in the future.

Think about it....
every minute
the world spends around
\$700,000 on war
while 30 children die of
starvation and preventable
illnesses

WHY WE ARE PROTESTING:

Because we can. Although we live in a country where people are too often vilified for who they are (witness the 212 years of violence towards Aboriginal people or Howard's recent attacks on single women and lesbians who want to use fertility clinics to conceive), for many of us, protesting is still one of the ways we can have a say.

Personal responsibility in a democracy does not end at the ballot box. Voicing your opinion on important matters facing yourself or others, whether here or overseas, is fundamental to ensuring that governments remain accountable to the people.

In protesting against globalisation we are acting not just for ourselves but in solidarity with the hundreds of thousands of women, children and men around the world who are adversely affected by the corporatisation of their jobs, communities and lands.

There is always a danger that if you don't protest injustice when you can, you will find yourself unable to. Governments and industry try to stop activists from working and voicing their concerns in all sorts of ways...in some countries outspoken people 'disappear', get shot down in the streets or jailed. In others they vilify activists by accusing them of everything from terrorism to recruiting schoolchildren. Sound familiar?

www want to ensure that a feminist analysis of the ways globalisation impacts on women around the world is central in the understanding of activists and on-lookers at these protests in September 2000.

And fundamentally we want to be involved in actions that we have planned, have control over and that will empower other women. And most of all, without being completely hedonistic, we want to have fun at the expense of the world's largest corporations.



WHAT WE ARE PROTESTING ABOUT:

The Golden Rule: whoever has the gold makes the rules.

Globalisation itself is an interesting phenomenon. For decades, activist movements worldwide have chanted the glorious slogan "Think Globally, Act Locally, Respond Personally". We have long talked and worked for a greater understanding of the differences and celebration of the similarities to be found in all cultures, religions, environments and beliefs around the world. We encourage solidarity actions and support environmental or social justice programs on the other side of the world. With the assistance of information technology like the internet, television and other media, we find ourselves being educated about issues faced by people we may never meet living in countries we may never visit. This kind of global awareness has been building over decades and can be attributed to many factors; but it is not this that we are protesting at S11.

Instead it is the greed and aggression of corporate globalisation. This too has been building for decades; some say this began with the two 'world wars' in the first half of the last century. But it became a more definite force in the 1970's and was cemented in the 1980's where we began to see conservative governments in some of the worlds most 'powerful' countries align their interests with big business, the alleged 'fall' of communism and huge advances in transport and communications technology.

However it began, of the top 100 economies in the world today, 52 of them are not countries at all but corporations.

The world's poor are getting poorer and the world's wealthy elite are getting fewer and richer. They do this by controlling the economies of all developing and industrialised countries, bringing economic rationalism to the fore and 'owning' words, seeds, ideas, illnesses and their cures, to name but a few things.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is not the same as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) or the World Bank, two other bodies that have seen massive community protests against them in this past year. But they all share a big chunk of the responsibility for promoting corporate globalisation. The WEF was incorporated in 1970 as a foundation and claims to be non-political, not tied to national interests, and totally independent, impartial and not-for-profit. Its members include 1, 000 CEO's from the worlds largest multinational corporations.

Corporate globalisation impacts on women in numerous ways. From the control of these corporations (few have women in executive positions and fewer still have women represented on their boards), to the control through

patenting of seeds in villages and regions world wide, corporate globalisation impacts on women daily.

Women make up 70% of the world's poor. This means that they are in a more vulnerable position and more able to be exploited. This happens to women workers who experience terrible conditions and get paid in many cases less than a dollar a day. Women are overwhelmingly also the primary carers for families. This means that they rely heavily on social services such as income support and health services. However, it is these programs that the IMF and World Bank decide (with support and lobbying power from the WEF) must be cut in order to qualify for international loans.

THINKING MEDIA:

Everytime we organise actions/demonstrations we hope that the media will lap it up and report favourably. But they rarely do and although the situation is complicated there are some basic reasons for this.

One reason is that the mainstream media are, by and large, part of transglobal corporations. For example, the publisher of the Age, John Fairfax Holdings, is a member of the WEF. So basically, we are on opposite sides. Fundamentally they will not give favourable coverage to something that will harm their business interests.

Another reason is that modern news reporting is packaged in bite-size pieces. This gives no room to explain the finer points of the reasoning behind any action. It also means that there is no difference between a uneventful demo and a non-violent demo.

The fact that a good headline makes a good story means that a volatile action is far better and this is why the issues at the core get lost.

If you put the above reasons together you can understand why the WTO actions in Seattle, for example, were reported as 'violent demonstrators silence free speech' rather than examining why thousands of people from all walks of life were gathered to defend what they believed in.

ACTIONS AND CHOICES:

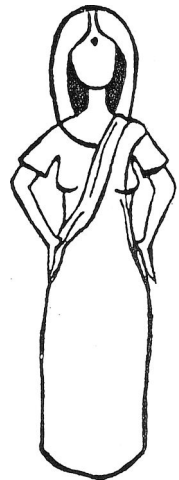
The principals and philosophy behind non-violent action are many and convoluted. It is generally agreed that there is no one method of non-violent action universally adopted by activists around the world. Some people believe in very structured approaches and a strong commitment to informing the police and powers that be of all actions planned. Others consider the police to be a tool of the state and therefore think it is detrimental to communicate with the police at all.

There is no one team or organisation organising around the S11 protests, and no one accepted principle on which to base actions. This can be both exciting and empowering for you and frustrating for the media and police who want to speak to a recognisable leader or spokesperson. But also brings with it a larger responsibility for personal action. You need to be sure of what you are doing and how to avoid getting yourself and others hurt.

Every person has the right to choose how they will participate. Most of us choose to respect the choices other protesters make and their contribution to the protests provided that they do not degrade, threaten, endanger or harm others. Don't forget to be aware of and respect the environment around you too.

Most importantly, take responsibility for yourself. That means taking on any legal ramifications for your actions, and making sure you have made yourself known to legal observers if you have any concerns about getting involved in arrestable actions. It can also mean informing others around you of any relevant medical details (they probably don't want to hear of the five operations you had on that in-grown toenail unless a horse steps on it though). Fundamentally it means owning your action and choices.

Remember, "Direct action" is not the only legitimate way you can be involved in protesting globalisation. Be creative, think big and go to it.



KNOW THEIR WEAPONS

CAPSICUM GAS, CONFUSION, CONCUSSION AND CONFINEMENT:

Without wanting to up the anxiety levels of women attending the S11 protests, we think it's important to provide some information (based on past experiences) about possible state force that may be used at these protests.

CAPSICUM GAS: It is impossible to tell whether the police will resort to Capsicum Gas. It was used on anti-uranium protesters earlier this year, and tear gas was used on refugee detainees in recent weeks, so a precedent has been set. One argument is that with so many protesters and the world's attention focussed on Melbourne they won't use it. Another line is that police want to send a strong message in light of the olympics and so they will use it. Either way, it can't hurt to know more about this weapon as it is in day-to-day use in Victoria.

Capsicum Gas is a spray consisting of the hot stuff from chillies concentrated and put into a handy, easy-to-use dispenser. By all accounts the sensation is like when you have been cutting chillies and then accidentally rub your eyes. Only it is worse because the spray is stronger and it also designed to get up your nose and into your respiratory system. The idea is that it is so painful that it immobilises you.

In a report on capsicum gas published in 1994 by a Victorian group called Coalition Against Repressive Police Equipment and Training (CARPET), it was noted that capsicum gas when sprayed onto skin will cause intense pain and/or numbness and may even cause permanent nerve damage and loss of sense perception by the skin. Because it is designed to be sprayed on the face and stick to oily residues on skins, clothes and hair, it is difficult to remove. It can cause burning, blistering and dermatitis of the skin and be particularly painful for anyone with existing skin problems like eczema or acne.

The report goes on to detail the potential for damage to the respiratory system and its dangers to anyone with respiratory illnesses like asthma (definitely bring ventolin spray if you ever suffer from asthma), the damage that can be done to eyes and nose membranes, vomiting and diarrhoea that can be caused if ingested, and the potential for deaths, particularly for those with heart conditions.

In addition, the report notes that:

"Testing of capsaicin [the essential ingredient of capsicum gas] on animals before pregnancy (prenatally) has led to foetal growth retardation... and fewer

pregnancies. This would suggest that the use of capsaicin could pose particular dangers for women.” (1.)

Stopping the spray from coming into contact with you directly or from standing 'upwind' is the best way to avoid the effects. Physical barriers, such as goggles and masks are reportedly effective too, but a limited to numerous factors, such as the ability to put them in place before being sprayed, etc. It is important that if you are sprayed you try to get help immediately and try to rinse your skins, eyes, nose and mouth with lots of water.

If you can avoid capsicum spray, do so. We do not yet know enough about the effects it can have on us, but what we do know clearly indicates that this is an extremely dangerous and violent chemical weapon.

CONFUSION: Another technique that the police have used in the past is to try and break the unity of the demo by the use of confusion. They have a number of ways of introducing confusion, but the general idea is to disrupt the focus and the strength of the crowd. It is important to keep your cool as in the heat of the moment you could do something dangerous.

Always make sure you have at least one 'buddy'. Someone who looks out for you and who you look out for. If you decide to get arrested it is good to have someone with you AND someone who doesn't get arrested who can take care of things from the outside. Another reason a buddy is a good idea is that it means you take a second to stop and talk about any decision you might otherwise be making on the run. Just taking a moment to consider the consequences is the best defence against confusion.

This is also where being part of an affinity group is a great idea. You should have a place to meet if something big happens and also a group plan of action. The plan doesn't have to be complicated - in fact the simpler the plan the better as with lots of stuff happening complicated ideas are likely to be impractical.

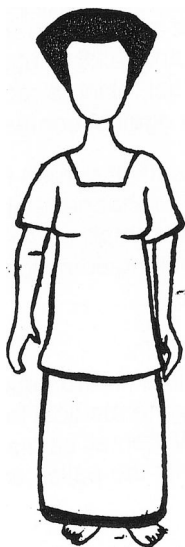
CONCUSSION: If you are hurt in a confrontation with the police, please take the time to get checked out by the medical team and record your injuries or the assault with the legal team. When all calms down you may choose to take action or file a complaint against the police and everything you record at the time will help.

Don't be afraid of the police - despite their uniforms, weapons and ability to hurt, they are just people. Sometimes we can even make them laugh - perhaps that proves their humanity.

CONFINEMENT: Locking people up, or the threat of being locked up is an effective weapon. There is a stigma associated with being arrested. Having a record, even if it is from a demo, can harm your chances of employment later. That is why you should consider carefully, whether or not you decide to get arrested. This means that you should, first off, know your rights. If there is a chance that you will decide to get arrested go straight to the legal advisors, do not pass go, do not collect \$100. Also make sure there is someone on the outside you know you are arrested and can check on you. If you decide to use a false name (not that we say you should) make sure that the person knows what name to ask for.

Using a false name has complications of its own. It is illegal to begin with and you could be given extra charges. But as an example where people have done so before, there was an effective action at the Jabiluka blockade in 1998 where everybody claimed to be John Howard. What ever you decide think it through. It could be very embarrassing (at the least) if you have identification that gives your real name after you have done otherwise.

Finally, if you decide to get arrested, be prepared for the long haul. The arrest is only the beginning. You will have to go to court and defend the charges and could face a hefty penalty. Many a good activist has been burnt out through the legal system.



COMMONSENSE FASHION TIPS FOR THE SOCIALLY ACTIVE:

Even the most experienced activists sometimes forget the simplest practical things when they are directly confronting the forces of the big bad ` for days on end.

If you are attending the protests for any period of time, whether you are planning to go up against the thin blue line in an arrestable situation or plan to be waving on from the sidelines, some of the following practical tips may be good:

• **Do wear comfortable, sturdy clothing -**

Clothes that do not rip easily and can't be torn off you too easily are the go.

Jeans and sturdy clothes are good, though many people now highly recommend covering your clothes with expendable water proof clothes made of fibres that won't absorb chemicals so much. Lightweight non-absorbent rain-wear may not be the greatest fashion statement but it could save you some nasty burns.

Don't wear skirts or shorts - they will not protect your legs and can lead to embarrassing moments when being dragged from a protest action!

A change of clothes too is a good idea if you can carry it - keep it in a sealed waterproof bag to ensure it is free of those pesky chemicals and Melbourne spring showers. And they may also provide a super-hero type opportunity to change if you need to 'disguise' yourself. Don't fall too much for the testosterone hype on this though.

• **Do wear practical shoes -**

Your shoes or boots should be able to protect your feet all day and stay comfortable when walking, running, marching, jumping or just standing around for hours - you just never know what you'll get yourself into!

Thongs and sandals are a no-go - horses hooves are painful on the tootsies.

• **Do not wear jewellery**

Ear-rings and nose-rings are often ripped out in confrontations; necklaces can be used to choke you; rings dig into your fingers and those of other people if your hand is being crushed. If you are wearing jewellery and suddenly find yourself in a confrontation situation and have the time, quickly take it off and put it safely in your pocket or give it to a friend.

- **Do be prepared for all weather -**

This is Springtime in Melbourne - it could hail one hour and be sunny the next, so be prepared for cool mornings, cold nights, and variable days!

Warm clothes are also good for people who are in shock. Wrap them up and keep them calm and talking. Don't forget to utilise the medical team if you think someone needs help.

- **Do tie your hair back -**

If you have long hair, tie it back. It is more practical and less painful if grabbed.

- **Do protect your eyes -**

Don't wear contact lenses if you can avoid them as if capsicum gas is used the chemicals can get trapped behind them and damage your eyes. Instead wear prescription glasses if possible.

Also invest in some goggles - proper sealable swimming goggles should be ok. But don't be fooled - police may well pull goggles and protective eyewear off protesters to spray them in the face.

- **Do protect your skin -**

Sunscreens, detergents, moisturisers, make up, vaseline, castor oil and other traditional skin care products or protectors can be dangerous as they bind with the chemicals in capsicum gas and other chemical weapons. This can mean more pain and a decreased ability for the chemicals to be washed off with water.

Instead, bring caps and hats for sun protection and have handy your bandanna and a small bottle of vinegar - soak the bandanna with vinegar and tie it around your face, covering the nose and mouth, if you are confronted by police or security forces who are going to use capsicum gas. It's the noughties activist version of that great ad campaign in the 80's and early 90's - slip on your waterproof gear, slop on some vinegar, slap on a hat and goggles! You'll look ridiculous of course and smell like a salad, but who cares - it'll hurt less and keep you in the game longer.

- **Do not take personal effects into action -**

They can be a hindrance to yourself and others. Either store them safely with a friend or simply don't bring anything you don't absolutely need with you.

• **Do know your rights -**

There are going to be legal people available to help out activists at the protest. When you first arrive, establish where they are and make contact with them if you have any legal concerns.

Also be sure to know what powers the police have, what they can and can not do and what weapons they may be carrying. Be sure to listen out for warnings the cops may give before they start making arrests or using force to remove people.

S11 is being built to be a peaceful, non violent protest, but be sure to know your rights anyway as police and security forces are preparing just as much as we are and things could easily deteriorate, despite the best efforts of all of us.

• **Do bring medical supplies -**

By some estimates, up to 20, 000 people may attend - accidents can happen - so be a good grrrl scout and be prepared. Some basic medical awareness is essential, especially in relation to weapons that could be used by police, such as capsicum gas, so know what to do just in case you find yourself, loved ones or indeed complete strangers writhing in agony on the lawns of the Crown Casino.

Everyone should bring some medical supplies, just to be on the safe side. Go through the 'Check Lists' on in this and other handbooks.

There are also going to be medical teams available at the protests. If you have any medical training or a qualification in first aid, think about offering your services to the team.

• **Do know your limitations**

We all have limitations in what we can handle, both physically and emotionally. In protest situations it is often easy to find yourself in situations which can push your limitations. Some people suffer from panic attacks when faced with police and security brutality. Others find the impacts of stress and the trauma can hit them hours, days or even weeks later.

So know your limitations. If you think you are in too deep, take some time out and reassess how you want to take part. There will be a lot on - the blockade lines are not the only way you can participate.

If you see other protesters getting stressed, panicky or hurt, take the time to check that they are ok and assist them in getting help if needed.

All injuries, no matter how small, should be checked out and recorded.

- **Do survey your environment and plan your exits**

Beware of any sharp obstacles or edges in your surrounding area. If you see broken bottles or other dangers, remove them or warn others around you to be aware of them.

Try to figure out any exits you may be able to use if you need to get out of a situation quickly. Remember, if you are leaving a sit in or link up demonstration, warn others that you are going to ensure they can close the gap after you safely. And make sure you can get away safely too.

- **Do carry water and oranges -**

Oranges are good as they are small, compact and thirst quenching.

Water is essential, both for drinking and in treating wounds and capsicum gas burns. Bring plenty for yourself and enough for others if possible - Don't bring water in glass bottles though.

Be careful about how much you drink before getting yourself into an arrestable situation too - you could be spending a lot of time in the back of a divvy van along with hundreds of others!

- **Feel empowered, stay calm, focussed & clear -**

Don't hesitate to take time out if you need to and try to be conscious of your impact on others - don't draw them into actions that they are reluctant about.

Civil disobedience is a practical way to challenge laws and actions taken by the "powers that be" which you may consider unjust. It is your right to participate in non-violent actions. Enjoy yourself.

- **Question everything**

Standard precept of activism - question everything - who are the WEF, what are we talking about, who the hell are the CEO's of BHP, Nike, Shell Oil, Nestle, Philip Morris, IBM anyway? What rights do you have, what rights do the police think they have, what is the true motivation for the media coverage and who is pushing that agenda? Who is telling you information and is it rumour or truth? And remember, it's ok to be paranoid if they are really doing it to you.

and remember - "If I can't dance, it's not my revolution" - (Em ma Goldman)

CHECKLIST OF SUPPLIES:

- ☐ solid compact backpack
- ☐ plastic water bottles
- ☐ small plastic bottles with vinegar
- ☐ practical clothes and shoes
- ☐ bandannas
- ☐ sealed goggles
- ☐ your identification if you so choose
- ☐ some money to buy snacks or catch trams/trains/etc
- ☐ hat
- ☐ change of clothes
- ☐ lightweight waterproof covers
- ☐ disposable cameras
- ☐ notebooks and pencil/pens
- ☐ mobile phones

FIRST AID SUPPLIES:

- ☐ any personal essential medicines
- ☐ bandaids
- ☐ bandages
- ☐ antiseptic cream (don't use on capsicum gas injuries unless checked or approved by the medical team)
- ☐ saline solution for eyes
- ☐ 4x4 gauze and other cloth to clean off chemicals and wounds
- ☐ ventolin/asthma sprays
- ☐ zip lock bags
- ☐ disposable latex gloves
- ☐ rescue remedy
- ☐ panadol/asprin

JUST A FEW CONTACTS:

- www.s11.org: for all things about the protest
- www.foe.org.au: for environment issues at the protest
- www.vthc.org.au: for union issues at the protest
- www.weforum.org: for all things to protest about
- 855 AM - 3CR: for broadcasting about the protest
Community Radio 3CR
phone (03) 9419 8377
continuous coverage from 7 - 10am
then updates on the hour every hour to 10pm

NOTES:

Use this space for recording names of people you see arrested or the numbers of police officers who you see abusing their powers (and pass on to legal teams asap)

Footnote:

(1) 'Capsicum Gas - Should the Police Have Another Weapon?'

Prepared by Damien Lawson and Felicity Ruby

for the Coalition Against Repressive Police Equipment and Training (CARPET)

January 1994